

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 6556

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, EFIN, PE
SUBJECT: U.S. ARMS SALES TO ECUADOR

1. AMBASSADOR HUBERT WIELAND, ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, CALLED ME IN JULY 21 ON THIS SUBJECT. HE CONCEDED AT THE OUTSET THAT REPRESENTATIONS FROM PERU IN THIS FIELD MIGHT APPEAR RATHER STRANGE, GIVEN HIS COUNTRY'S CONSIDERABLE ARMS PURCHASES. HE ALSO CONCEDED THAT THE US HAS THE SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO SELL ARMS WHEREVER IT WISHES. BUT THE GOP IS DISTURBED BY THE "UNFORTUATE COINCIDENCE" OF THE ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO SELL SUCH A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF EVEN DEFENSIVE WEAPONS -- WIELAND REFERRED TO ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-TANK EQUIPMENT COMING AT THE TIME THE VENEZUELAN/AYACUCHO INITIATIVE ON ARMS RESTRAINT.

2. WIELAND SIAD THAT THE GOP HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED BY PRESIDENT CARTER'S SUPPORT FOR ARMS RESTRAINT IN THE HEMISPHERE AND PARTICULARLY BY OUR INTENTION TO DISCUSS RESTRAINT WITH OTHER SUPPLIERS. WIELAND ALSO UNDERSTOOD THT THE US IS BY NO MEANS THE EXCLUSIVE SUPPLIER TO ECUADOR -- THAT THE FRENCH AND OTHERS WERE INVOLVED. BUT THE IMPENDING US TRANSACTIONS WITH ECUADOR HAD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LIMA 06556 242302Z

ATTRACTED THE GREATEST ATTENTION IN PERU. WIELAND REPEATED THAT IT WAS UNFORTUATE THAT THI CAME ALONG JUST WHEN IT DID -- JUST AS LANS WERE GETTING UNDERWAY FOR THE NEXT STEP IN THE VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE WHICH HE THROUGH WOULD BE A MINISTERIAL MEETING IN CARACAS. WIELAND ALSO WENT ON AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT PERU'S PEACEFUL INTENTIONS TOWARD ECUADOR AND THE EFFORT TO

IMPROVE RELATIONS, AS WITH ADMIRAL PARODI'S SCHEDULED VISIT TO ADMIRAL OLMEDO NEXT MONTH. WIELAND SAID THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY CALLED IN THE ECUADOREAN AMBASSADOR TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS SIMILAR TO THOSE HE WAS MAKING TO ME.

3. I REPLIED THAT IN FACT SOMETHING OF A COINCIDENCE HAD BEEN INVOLVED INASMUCH AS THE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT ECUADOR'S POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM WENT BACK MANY MONTHS. I REVIEWED FOR WIELAND, AS I HAVE FOR A NUMBER OF PERUVIANS LATELY, OUR POLICY OF RESTRAINT ON ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE HEMISPHERE AND OUR REFUSAL TO INTRODUCE THE NEWER AND MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS SYSTEM. I CONCLUDED BY UNDERTAKING TO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE GOP'S EXPRESSION OF CONCERN.

4. COMMENT: I HAVE FINALLY SEEN -- IN A CLIPPING FROM THE JULY 3 ISSUE OF AVIATION WEEK - A RUNDOWN ON THE DEPARTMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE ULCANCHAPARRAL SALE. THE ARTICLE ALSO CONTAINS SOME INTERESTING REFERENCES TO WHAT WNET ON BEYOND HIS PREPARED STATEMENT DURING BUSHNELL'S APPEARANCE BEFORE THE HIRC. THE DEPARTMENT'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE EMBASSY WITH ANY INFORMATION ON THESE MATTERS OF PUBLIC RECORD HAS MADE IT RATHER DIFFICULT FOR ME TO DEAL ON THE SUBJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LIMA 06556 242302Z

WITH THE PERUVIANS WHOSE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAS BEEN MORE DILIGENT.

5. THE PERUVIAN COMPLAINT IN ESSENCE IS SELF-SERVING. BUT I AGREE IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS BIG SALE CAME ALONG JUST WHEN IT DID.

SHLAUDEMANN

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